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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 29 January 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a statement made by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey on 28 January 1993, regarding the report of the Special Commission of Inquiry on the assassination of Mr. Hakija Turajlic, Deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/25130) (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 143, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mustafa AKŞIN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Statement made on 28 January 1993 by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

Following the assassination of Mr. Hakija Turajlic, Deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on 8 January 1993 by a Serbian militia under the command of high-ranking officers while under the protection of UNPROFOR, Turkey requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council. At its meeting, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement, requesting the Secretary-General of the United Nations to undertake a full investigation of the incident and report to it without delay.

The report submitted by the Special Commission of Inquiry appointed by the Secretary-General has been studied carefully by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We have noted with concern and regret that the report was written in a manner that plays down the gross negligence and heavy responsibility that UNPROFOR bears. It appears to seek excuses for the Serbian action and presents the assassination as the work of a single assailant.

We have also noted with concern that the request made by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to conduct the investigation jointly was declined by UN Headquarters.

UNPROFOR is responsible for the protection of civilians and has the authority to use its weapons to protect lives. By remaining a mere spectator to the assassination of Mr. Turajlic, whom it had a responsibility to protect, UNPROFOR failed to exercise its authority and to carry out its duty. The explanations provided to minimize these failures are inadmissible.

The report also reveals that the UN Security Council resolutions are still not being implemented and that UNPROFOR is ineffective and completely dependent on the whims of the Serbian militia. This demonstrates once again how justified Turkey is in insisting that the Security Council takes action to bring to an end the Serbian aggression and to strengthen the mandate of UNPROFOR.

The report provides an insight into the inexcusable lack of coordination between the relevant UN agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this connection, one disturbing aspect of the report is the attempt to draw a direct link between the incident and the arrival of a Turkish aircraft that brought relief supplies to Sarajevo, its landing having been authorized and cleared by the UNHCR, and to relate the brutal murder to the presence of this aircraft in Sarajevo. Turkey cannot accept this fallacious reasoning.

The assassination of Mr. Turajlic demonstrates once again the violence and cruelty of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbs are committing aggression against an independent and sovereign state, member of the United Nations, for the purpose of establishing ethnic hegemony. They are attempting to acquire land through the use of force and by deporting the local population from their homeland through the practice of "ethnic cleansing." What we are expecting from the United Nations is for it to bring to an end this flagrant violation of international law, the consequences of the policy of "ethnic cleansing," and, above all, to bring about peace through securing the ending of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Turkey condemns vigorously the atrocities which have cost the lives of more than 150,000 people and caused the displacement of a further 1.7 million. Turkey also calls upon the United Nations to draw the appropriate conclusions from the assassination of Mr. Turajlic and henceforth take effective measures to put an end to the Serbian aggression. Finally, we expect all those who bear responsibility for the death of Mr. Turajlic to be punished.